

# BLACKBERRY PRESERVES

The Journal of the

## KIRKLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY



**Wanda Von Kettler, *Seattle Star* Journalist**

Our guest writer from a century ago: Pages 3 - 6

Volume XXX, Issue III

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[www.kirklandheritage.org](http://www.kirklandheritage.org)

## From the President

Chris Neir



Thank you Andrea Kyrala for your years of service as bookkeeper for KHS. And thanks now to my dad, Jim Neir, for stepping in. This is not an easy position to fill but KHS has been very fortunate for many years.



Railroad historians, Matt McCauley and Kent Sullivan presented part 2 of their research on the rail lines in Kirkland for our April program. Part 3 is planned for next year.



VP Matt McCauley introduced Sandra Middleton in March. President Chris Neir was busy videotaping the program. Sandy's talk with be on the KHS website soon.



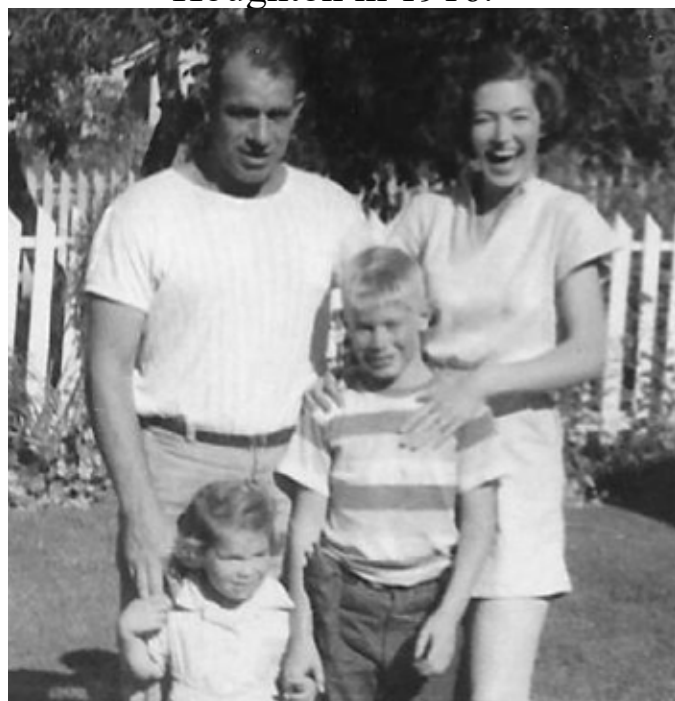
Thank you **Karen Schickling** for your commitment to get our meetings back on schedule. Please leave a message for Karen if you have any ideas for the future.

## KHS Monthly Programs

Heritage Hall  
203 Market Street  
7:00 p.m.

**May 31, 2023**

This will be our annual meeting. Our guest speakers are **Jan McLaughlin** and her brother **Jock McLaughlin**. They will talk about the McLaughlins in Kirkland. LWHS's Mac Field is named for their father who was born in Houghton in 1916.



**Saturday, June 3, 2023**

**10:00 - Noon**

## Annual Kirkland Cemetery Tour

Directed by Kirkland Historian & Author, Matt McCauley



**September 27, 2023**

The Blackberry Ice Cream Social will return. A speaker has been scheduled.

## Sight-seeing in Kirkland

May 1923

By Wanda Von Kettler, Journalist for the  
*Seattle Star*

(Wanda von Kettler graduated from the University of Washington school of Journalism. She moved to New York by 1925 where she was also a Journalist. She wrote several books that are collector's items in 2023. She passed away in 1999.)

I rode to Kirkland and reached the city after some 40 minutes of travel over the Bothell highway and the Lakeshore road. The bus had whirled thru the "U" district in Seattle onto the highway, past the cottages and green lands of Victory heights and past Lake Forrest Park. It had turned off at the Junction, one mile south of Bothell, onto the boulevard and had rolled around Lake Washington to Kirkland's "center", just 21 miles by road from Seattle - where the boulevard connects the end of the Yellowstone Trail, and the "iron policeman" stands guard.

The Yellowstone Trail? It is well known that Kirkland has adopted its western end and called it "Kirkland Ave." The trail proper, however, extends across the continent from Plymouth, Massachusetts to the West coast. At Kirkland its journey is over, for there at the ferry landing it literally runs into the lake. And the "iron policeman"? He's the straight up-and-down monument-like structure who directs the traffic. Signs hung upon him read: "Go Slow," "keep to the right," "Redmond, six miles east," "Seattle, seven miles west," "Seattle 21 miles north," "Seattle, 24 miles south." All the Seattle directions being due to the position of Kirkland situated right on the Lakeshore Boulevard, which circles the lake and therefore, passes thru Seattle on one side and Kirkland on the other.

Kirkland has a population of something like 7,000. The majority of its people are engaged in business enterprises in the town proper, in work at the woolen mills, in farming and ranching nearby. Some work at the shipyard,

some at the lumber yard and in the summer, both men and women are employed at the cannery. Thanks to Glen M. Johnson, a trustee of the Kirkland Commercial club, and president of both the National Bank of Kirkland and the Kirkland State Bank and Mrs. Johnson, who offered to "show" me the town, I saw the inside workings of a few of these establishments on the day of my visit.



The Iron Policeman standing guard taken from a postcard.

I'd never been in a woolen mill before. I'd always seen wool either on the sheep who grew it or in the finished product. Saturday I saw it being scoured, carbonized, dyed, dried, carded and finally spun. I went thru the Matzen Woolen Mill where 123 people at present are employed and where George Matzen, president of the company, has what he calls his "motor-boat" office. The mills are built on the lake shore, near the business district of Kirkland. Almost due west from the mill dock, Seattle is seen in the distance. To the right of Seattle is Sand Point. Seven miles of blue lake lie between the shores. "And real often" Matzen explained to me, "when the machinery out in the plant is steadily humming along and I'm just sitting at the desk and looking out of the window, I get a sort of sub-conscious idea that I'm in a motor-boat. It's a great life."



The **Matzen Woolen Mill** as it looked in 1913. Was originally called the **Seattle Woolen Mill**.



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M. J. Marks, superintendent of the plant and recently elected Kirkland councilman, showed us about, giving us facts and figures. Wool from Montana, Eastern Washington, Oregon and California, I learned, amid the whirr and roar of machinery, is transformed at the mills annually into approximately 400,000 yards of material. Only one other woolen mill plant operates in Washington - that at Washougal, in the southern part of the state.



A rare inside view of the Matzen Woolen Mill.

Kirkland's cannery sounded like a boiler factory. I wondered why. We knew the place wasn't in operation and wasn't expected to be until approximately June 6, when the first canning strawberries are due. We made our way along a narrow porch and peeked thru a doorway to behold Henry Fisher himself, president of the Fisher Canning company, stepping about energetically in a pair of overalls. Some five or six others in overall garb were also present. All were busy with hammers, saws, coppers slabs or boards. "Working", explained Mr. Fisher, "getting ready for the summer rush. More than 200 workers this year. Expect to put up 1,600,000 cans of fruit."

"Where to sell?" I asked. "Europe-sales already made."

So that was it! This was the Western Canning Company whose strawberries, loganberries, raspberries, black berries, cherries, apples and pears are shipped abroad!



The cannery that Wanda visited. It burned in 1923.



Clipping from the  
*East Side Journal*  
February 1927

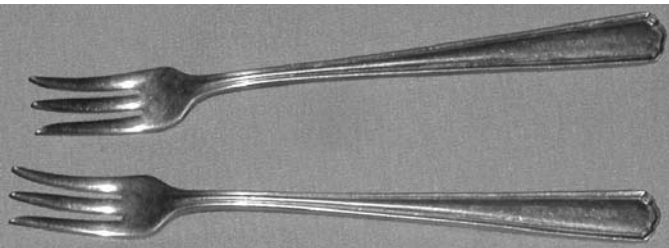
At my next stop I gasped, but not in terror. One acre and a half of blooming dazzled-hued tulips lay before me. I was at the tulip farm of John van Aalst, native of Holland, who arrived in the West five years ago searching for "tulip soil". He settled in Kirkland and each year sense has planted bulbs-one-half million this spring have shot their splendor upward on van Aalst's farm.

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The *Seattle Times* featured Kirkland and the van Aalst bulb growing gardens in 1929. It is tragic that KHS still has no real photos of this historic business and family.

What I didn't see in Kirkland, I heard about. The hog ranch, one of the largest in the world-situated between Kirkland and Redmond. Eight thousand hogs in all. The many nearby lettuce farms. The lumber yard. The pickle plant.



Seattle restaurants provided much of the "slop" that was fed to the hogs. As workers bussed the tables, silverware and butter plates were often overlooked. Rose Hill families salvaged some of these items.

(The Mt. View Pickles Plant, owned and operated by Fred Klein, was in the Totem Lake area...then called Lake Wittenmyer.

The Pickle Plant that **Wanda Von Kettler** is referring to is unknown to your current editor. If you have any knowledge about Mt. View Pickles or this much earlier plant.....please call or write.)

Civic pride has done considerable for many towns, Kirkland among them. The Kirkland Woman's Club, with a present membership of 103 I learned, devotes considerable time to "community betterment." It has succeeded in establishing a library and a baby clinic.



The **Kirkland Woman's Club House** was built in 1925 and is one of Kirkland's treasured Landmarked buildings. The Baby Clinic and Library that Ms. Von Kettler referred to were located in private homes.

And as for the town's hope for the future-well, just before I rolled onto the ferry for a lake ride back to Seattle, I met one R. H. Collins, a resident of Kirkland since 1890. He explained to me that he was an "old fossil," but Mrs. Johnson corrected his statement and said "old timer."

Said he, "Well, come again, but next time we hope we'll be better equipped to greet you. We hope to have a real traffic cop out there in the road by the Iron man within another month."

So very possibly I will be met by the police the next time I go to Kirkland.

The cannery she wrote about was the Fisher Cannery. It was next to the railroad in Kirkland. This cannery burned in 1923 and was rebuilt. That cannery burned in 1931 and Mr. Fisher retired which left Kirkland with no cannery or packing plant. The Kirkland Cannery that is still with us, was

**Kirkland history continues on page 6**

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opened in 1936. It is the last known WPA project in Kirkland.

See more Cannery history in the Nov/Dec 2009 *Blackberry Preserves*. See more about the Yellowstone Trail in the Jan/Feb 2023 *Blackberry Preserves*. See more about the van Aalst Bulb Farm in the Sept/Oct 2022 *Blackberry Preserves*.



## Life Members:

Richard and Lisa Altig, Maureen Baskin, Laura Bradley-Pierucci, Bob and Valerie Burmester, David and Tasha Davis, Steve Lamson, Anne R. Fleming, Sandi Kelly, Ray & Clare Lincoln, Joan McBride/Margaret Meister, Matt McCauley, Larry Miller, Laura May Moseng, Jim & Cathy Neir, Tom & Sally J. Neir, Richard & Kathy Nelson, Timothy & Mary Ord, Michael & Cathy Radcliff, Darlene "Dee" Miller Saunders, Larry Springer/Penny Sweet, Laura Westlund.

## Corporate Members:

Hallmark Realty, Madison House.



KHS receives 100% commission from the sales of Bob Neir's *A City Comes of Age* and Steve Lamson's *The Power of a Dream*.



Help keep Kirkland beautiful!

Sunday, May 21, 2023 9 am – 3 pm

Volunteers check in at Hallmark Realty

\*Food will be provided

Sign up with the QR code or email

GarrettOiness@hotmail.com



Volunteer Here

See reverse side for volunteer FAQ →

Kirkland Heritage Society hours:  
Monday from 10 to noon  
Wednesday from 2 to 5



## In the Mail

I enjoy reading *Blackberry Preserves*. I would really enjoy learning more about the development of the land north of NE 132 Street that is Juanita. Why did King County plan no parks. So many things to know. Juanita is my children's home town.

Ingrid Salmon

Ingrid, There is a lot of pioneer history in that area. Some has been covered in the past and more will be. As for the parks, now that the area is officially a part of Kirkland, the City is attempting to acquire and develop neighborhood parks. All past issues of *Blackberry Preserves* are on the KHS website.



Message from Linda Johnson Jatton:

I email a reminder about upcoming programs if I have your email. If you do not get an email and would like to, please let me know by leaving a message at 425-827-3446.



4Culture's Heritage Program Director, Chieko Phillips, joined the *Greater Eastside Heritage Group* when we met in March. This group is composed of the six small eastside history groups. We met faithfully twice a year to share ideas and concerns until Covid. It is wonderful to start sharing again.



# Blackberry Preserves

President:	Chris Neir	425.827.3446
Vice-president	Matt McCauley	425.827.3446
Secretary:	Janice Gerrish	425.827.3446
Treasurer:	Loita Hawkinson	425.827.1950
At-Large	Linda Jatton	425.827.3446
At-Large	Dave Sherbrooke	425.827.3446
At-Large	Libbi Wright	425.827.3446
At-Large:		425.827.3446
At-Large:	Kim Hartman	810.599.1754

## Committee Chairs & members

Archives & Collections:	Loita Hawkinson* Libbi Wright	425.827.1950 425.827.3446
Bookkeeping	Jim Neir	425.827.3446
Blackberry Preserves:	Loita Hawkinson Guest Writers	425.827.1950 425.827.3446
Cemetery Tour & Memorial	Matt McCauley* Sue Contreras Loita Hawkinson	425.827.3446
Hello Girls**	Linda Jatton*	425.827.3446
Feature Writers	Loita Hawkinson Guest writers	425.827.1950
Programs:	Karen Schickling	425.827.3446
Time Keepers	Marin Harris* Shannon Harris	425.827.3446
Membership	Bob Gerrish	425.827.3446
Oral History:	Loita Hawkinson	425.827.1950
Planning and Historic Sites:	Christina Lewis	425.827.3446
Scholarship Committee	Jim Neir*	206.478.3173 425.827.3446

\* Chair or Co-chairs

\*\* During WWI, the Hello Girls were ladies who served as telephone operators. For KHS, these sweet ladies email to remind you of the next meeting or event.

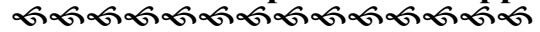
Webmaster: Christopher Neir

## Kirkland Heritage Society

[www.kirklandheritage.org](http://www.kirklandheritage.org)

425-827-3446

**KHS is 100% volunteer with no paid staff.  
Your memberships make it happen.**



### 2023 MEMBERSHIP

Kirkland Heritage Society

January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

KHS qualifies for tax exemption under 501(c) (3) and your contribution is deductible to the extent allowed by law. We qualify for matching gift contributions by those employers who offer this benefit.

### Membership Category

_____ Senior / Student	\$20
_____ Individual	\$25
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_____ Life Member	\$1,000
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I would like to make a contribution: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED:

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Checks should be made payable and mailed to:

Kirkland Heritage Society  
Heritage Hall, Lower Level  
203 Market Street  
Kirkland, WA 98033.



## TO RENT HERITAGE HALL

**Call the City of Kirkland's  
Customer Service Division at:  
425-587-3300**



Photo from the 2022 Kirkland Cemetery Tour.  
 Matt McCauley will again give the tour on June 3, 2023  
 from 10:00 to 12:00 noon.

Matt's tours are always new and fresh.  
 It is a free tour with any donations going to mark  
 unmarked graves.

**Blackberry Preserves** is produced by the **Kirkland Heritage Society**, for KHS members and those interested in Kirkland's past. **Loita Hawkinson, Editor.**  
 For information on KHS - visit our website: [www.kirklandheritage.org](http://www.kirklandheritage.org),  
 or call 425 827-3446 to leave a message.

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